

WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY
College of Osteopathic Medicine



Student Handbook and Catalog
2023-2024

DISCIPLINARY ISSUES

Since academic grades are only one criterion for probationary status, the P&M Committee may confer with the Student Affairs Committee, and either committee may recommend to the WCUCOM Dean probationary status at any time. Probation, mandatory leave of absence, or dismissal may also be considered by WCUCOM for any student who fails to maintain ethical, moral, personal, or professional conduct standards, who fails to abide by WCUCOM policies, rules, and regulations, who fails to fulfill legal or financial obligations, or who is considered to be mentally or emotionally unfit or impaired.

Student Affairs Committee

The Student Affairs Committee is responsible for deliberation and recommendation(s) to the Associate Dean, Student Affairs in matters involving violations of student conduct, professionalism, classroom etiquette, code of ethics, and WCUCOM rules and policies not directly related to academic performance. Substantial compliance with any conditions associated with the leave of absence will also be determined by the Student Affairs Committee, and a recommendation to the Associate Dean, Student Affairs will be made prior to granting a return from leave.

Guidelines Regarding Student Violations of Student Conduct, Professionalism, Classroom Etiquette, Code of Ethics, and WCUCOM Rules and Policies Not Directly Related to Academic Performance

Filing of a complaint of violation(s) of student conduct, professionalism, classroom etiquette, code of ethics, and WCU or WCUCOM rules and policies not directly related to academic performance

If an individual has violated WCUCOM policy as outlined in the *WCUCOM Student Handbook and Catalog* under the sections titled “Code of Ethics” and “Professional Standards” or other sections regarding professional, ethical, personal or other conduct, the student should be reported to the Associate Dean, Student Affairs. Anyone with knowledge of such offenses should report the same *within* 30 days after discovery of the incident. The Student Affairs Committee will review the report and will schedule a separate meeting with the student and complainant(s) if the accusations are felt to be warranted unless the safety of any individual student or group of individuals is in jeopardy by doing so. Please see the safety policy under Duty to Warn.

Complaint Procedures

- Any charge, accusation, or allegation which is to be presented against a student, and, which if proved, may subject a student to disciplinary action, must be submitted in writing in as complete detail as possible to the Office of the Associate Dean, Student Affairs promptly by an individual, organization, or department making the accusation;

- The Associate Dean, Student Affairs of WCUCOM or his or her designee will conduct a preliminary investigation in order to determine whether disciplinary actions should be instituted. The Associate Dean, Student Affairs or designee will advise the student of the charge(s) against them (unless the safety of the any individual student or group of individuals is in jeopardy by doing so), consult with other parties who may be involved or who have information regarding the incident, and review other relevant material. Following this preliminary investigation, which shall be concluded within 30 days of filing the complaint, the Associate Dean, Student Affairs or designee shall take one of the following actions:
 - Recommend to the Student Affairs Committee that the matter be dismissed if there is no basis for the allegation(s) or the allegation(s) fails to warrant disciplinary actions. If the Student Affairs Committee agrees with the recommendation, then the Chair of the Student Affairs Committee will file a written report with the Office of the WCUCOM Dean. The individuals involved shall be notified electronically by the WCUCOM Dean that the complaint has been dismissed, or does not warrant action. The complainant may, if they choose, appeal the decision of the Associate Dean, Student Affairs or directly to the Student Affairs Committee,
 - Refer the matter to conciliation. The accused student shall receive notice in writing electronically if a matter is referred to conciliation, or
 - Refer the matter to the Student Affairs Committee for recommendation to the WCUCOM Dean.

Conciliation Conference

If the Associate Dean, Student Affairs has a reasonable expectation that an equitable decision can be determined by a Conciliation Conference, he/she may use this vehicle to resolve the matter. A Conciliation Conference is not required before the matter is referred to the Student Affairs Committee. The Conciliation Conference, if conducted, shall be conducted by the Associate Dean, Students Affairs or a qualified designee (Conciliator).

The following procedures shall be in effect at this conference:

- If the complaint is found to lack merit, then the Associate Dean, Student Affairs will report this opinion to the Chairperson of the Student Affairs Committee. If the Student Affairs Committee agrees with the recommendation, then the Chair of the Student Affairs Committee will file a written report with the Office of the WCUCOM Dean. The individuals involved shall be notified electronically by the WCUCOM Dean that the complaint has been dismissed, or does not warrant action. The complainant may, if they choose, appeal the decision of the Associate Dean, Student Affairs directly to the Student Affairs Committee. An effort will be made to resolve the matter by mutual agreement;
- If an agreement is reached, then the Conciliator shall report his/her recommendation to the Student Affairs Committee. If the Student Affairs Committee agrees with the recommendation, then the Chair of the Student Affairs Committee will file a written report with the repective Associate Dean or the designee. The individuals involved shall be notified electronically by the WCUCOM Dean that the parties have reached an

agreement; If no agreement is reached, or if the student fails to appear, the Associate Dean, Students Affairs or Conciliator shall refer the matter to the Student Affairs Committee; and

- The Conciliator may speak at a Student Affairs Committee meeting regarding information received during the Conciliation Conference.

Notice to Appear Before the Student Affairs Committee

If a student is required to appear before the Student Affairs Committee, then the student will be notified in writing electronically using the student's WCU email, giving him/her at least five business days' notice. The notice will provide the time, date, and location of the meeting. This is to ensure that the student has sufficient time to prepare for appearance before the Student Affairs Committee. *Notice sent to WCU maintained email address will constitute receipt by the student.* Failure of the student to appear, without prior notice to the Committee Chair, will not preclude the Student Affairs Committee from proceeding with the scheduled hearing or making a recommendation to the WCUCOM Dean.

The electronic notice shall contain the following:

- An itemized statement of the accusations(s) made against the student, including the rule, bylaw, or regulation he/she is charged with violating, and the possible penalties for such violation. Such statement may be amended at any time, including during the proceedings if information regarding additional charges, or the need to drop a charge, is discovered; and
- A statement that the student is entitled to the following considerations during the Student Affairs Committee meeting:
 - i. to present his/her side of the situation
 - ii. to present persons having information about the incident and any documentation pertinent to the accusation on his/her behalf with written pre-approval of the Student Affairs Committee
 - iii. to question persons having information pertinent to the accusations
 - iv. to remain silent without admitting culpability
 - v. a warning that any facts or materials presented to the Committee could be used at a non-college hearing such as in a civil and/or criminal proceeding.
- It should be noted, however, that if school officials determine that there exists evidence of a security issue or other conditions that might place WCU students, faculty, staff, or any additional personnel at risk, the prior notice timeline and summary of charges may be shortened or waived.

Student Affairs Committee Procedures

The following procedures shall apply at the hearing before the Student Affairs Committee:

- The Chairperson shall preside at the hearing. The Chairperson shall inform the student of the charges, the hearing procedures, and student's rights;

- The College shall make a record of each fact-finding hearing by minutes. Tape recording or the equivalent is permitted for transcription purposes only. A disciplined student is entitled to request a copy of any minutes without cost;
- Student Affairs Committee meetings are closed hearings, open only to the student, committee members, and invitees of the Chairperson who may include witnesses;
- The role of the Student Affairs Committee is to listen to the materials/facts, ask questions of any person presented as having information pertinent to the accusations, review the testimony and relevant materials/facts presented at the hearing, and render a determination as to whether or not a WCU or WCUCOM standard has been violated;
- At the end of the fact-finding phase, the following may take place
 - The student may, with the permission of the chairperson, introduce additional records, such as character references,
 - The college will introduce a copy of the student's previous disciplinary record, provided the student was shown a copy of the record prior to the fact-finding phase,
 - In the event the student has been determined to have violated WCU or WCUCOM standards, the records and documents introduced by the student and the college shall be used by the committee to determine a recommendation to the WCUCOM Dean of appropriate penalty;
- The WCUCOM Dean shall be sent a copy of the Student Affairs Committee's decision
- The WCUCOM Dean will make a final decision, communicating this decision to the student and appropriate WCUCOM officials;
- The committee may have more than one meeting with the student in order to address the concerns of the committee and give the student an opportunity to respond to the questions and charges;
- The following are prohibited in all Student Affairs Committee meetings unless otherwise authorized in writing by the WCUCOM Dean
 - Electronic recording of the meeting, except for official minutes,
 - Legal counsel, and
 - Uninvited individuals; and
- The Office of the WCUCOM Dean will consider the Committee's findings and recommendations and notify the student within five business days, excluding WCUCOM holidays. The WCUCOM Dean may appoint a designee to communicate the findings to the student.

Non-academic Warning

The current Translation Student Handbook states that a letter of warning may be given in lieu of a more stringent penalty. The WCUCOM Student Affairs Committee may enact this disciplinary device when a finding of violation of the standards stated above are found to exist (a finding of guilty), but in the majority opinion of the committee, probation or dismissal is over prescriptive. Letters of non-academic warning will be considered as part of the committee's recommendation for future infractions.

Non-academic Probation

Probation is defined as a warning in that any future behavior/situations inconsistent with the professional behavior outlined in the *WCUCOM Student Handbook and Catalog* or deemed inappropriate by the Student Affairs Committee may result in his or her immediate dismissal from WCUCOM. The Student Affairs Committee will make a recommendation to the WCUCOM Dean regarding whether the probationary status is to be recorded in the student's academic file. Any student put on probation will remain so for the stated time, which may include his or her entire stay at WCUCOM. Letters of non-academic probation will be considered as part of the committee's recommendation for future infractions.

Non-academic Probation requires the following:

- Student compliance with all stipulated requirements in the letter of Non-academic Probation from the Office of the WCUCOM Dean or the Dean's designee;
- Prohibition against student holding any office in student government, clubs, etc.;
- Prohibition against student serving on any committees or as a peer tutor;
- Prohibition against student travel to conventions, conferences, meetings, recruiting trips or other travel that will require time away from the classroom;
- Participation in an individualized remediation program designed with an advisor or counselor;
- The committee may recommend other requirements to the WCUCOM Dean; and
- The WCUCOM Dean may accept, reject, and/or alter the Committee's recommendations.

Students on Non-academic Probation who fail to meet all requirements of Non-academic Probation may be recommended for dismissal.

Probation, mandatory leave of absence, or dismissal may also be considered by WCUCOM for any student who fails to maintain academic, ethical, moral, personal, or professional conduct standards, who fails to abide by WCUCOM policies, rules, and regulations, who fails to fulfill legal or financial obligations.

Non-Academic Probation with Conditions

This form of probation includes all of the sanctions of probation. In addition, the student's continued enrollment at WCUCOM is based on the student fulfilling certain obligations as set forth by the Office of the WCUCOM Dean or the Dean's designee. Failure to meet the terms and conditions of non-academic probation with conditions will result in either:

- Immediate dismissal by the WCUCOM Dean; or
- Referral back to Student Affairs for a recommendation to the Dean.

Non-Academic Dismissal

WCUCOM reserves the right to dismiss any student at any time prior to graduation. Circumstances warranting such action may be of a, professional, legal, or social nature, among others.

If a student is dismissed, there will be no refund of tuition, fees, or other payments previously made to WCU or WCUCOM.

Appeals of Non-Academic Dismissal

Appeals shall follow those outlined in the most recent *WCUCOM Student Handbook and Catalog* that is in effect at the time of the infraction (See APPEALS POLICY).

Student Grievances

An academic grievance is a dispute concerning some aspect of academic involvement arising from an administrative or faculty decision that the student claims is unjust, arbitrary, or capricious. Students are responsible for making every attempt possible to resolve issues informally and immediately. First the student must discuss the issue with the Instructor/Course Director. If the grievance is not resolved informally, the student may present a written grievance to the appropriate WCUCOM official.

A student's grievance concerning a WCUCOM faculty or staff member should be made to the WCUCOM Associate Dean, Student Affairs. A grievance concerning a WCU faculty (non-COM faculty) or staff member should be made to the person's immediate supervisor or to the WCU Vice President of Academic Affairs. The supervisor shall resolve the grievance expeditiously according to procedures outlined in the student/faculty handbooks.

A grievance concerning another student should be made to the WCUCOM Associate Dean, Student Affairs or the Student Affairs Committee Chair. After a written grievance is received, a response to the grievance will be issued within 10 business days. After a response by the appropriate WCUCOM official, any grievance may be appealed to the President of WCU. Such appeal must be in writing and must be filed within five calendar days of the response. Complaints regarding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act are outlined in the section heading "FERPA."

Complaints or grievances concerning WCUCOM accreditation standards and procedures should be submitted in writing to the Secretary, Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation, American Osteopathic Association, 142 East Ontario Street, Chicago, IL 60611; Phone: 312.202.8097; Fax: 312.202.8397; predoc@osteopathic.org. Upon receipt of the complaint, the WCUCOM Dean will assign an ad hoc committee composed of the Associate Dean responsible for the area of accreditation concern, three faculty members, one which would be related to the academic concern, and two students selected by the Student Government Association (SGA).

The committee shall review the complaint(s) and determine whether the appropriate standards were met according to the most recent publication of the Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures. If the committee determines, in its opinion, that the academic standards are not in accordance with the American Osteopathic Association Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation standards, the committee shall provide corrective recommendations that will bring WCUCOM in

accordance with the standards. The committee report shall be submitted to the WCUCOM Dean for consideration and corrective action.

The WCUCOM Dean will then provide the complainant with a written response within 30 days of receipt of the complaint. Should the student complaint related to accreditation be upheld and valid, WCUCOM will establish, as a method of performance improvement, a monitoring of the accreditation deficiency for a period of no less than five years to monitor the corrective action with yearly reporting to the WCUCOM Dean to ensure compliance. At no time will any adverse action be allowed against any faculty, staff, or student(s) reporting the adverse accreditation standard. Any reportable adverse activity against any faculty, staff, or student(s) will result in disciplinary action as delineated above.

All complaints or grievances and the WCUCOM Dean's written response, adjudication, and resolution of such complaints will be filed and maintained in the Office of the WCUCOM Dean.

Check-out Procedures for Student Dismissal or Withdrawal

It is imperative that a student who leaves WCUCOM for any reason goes through the check-out procedure before his/her dismissal or withdrawal. Failure to complete this exit procedure will give WCUCOM the right to withhold all records pertaining to the student's attendance. The check-out procedure is as follows:

- If the student is withdrawing, then he/she must supply the Associate Dean, Student Affairs with a letter of resignation;
- For withdrawal requests, the Associate Dean, Student Affairs will make a recommendation to the WCUCOM Dean to accept or deny;
- All withdrawals must be approved by the Dean;
- If the request is accepted, then the WCUCOM Dean will notify the student, the Associate Registrar for WCUCOM, and the WCUCOM Associate Dean, Student Affairs;
- If the student is being dismissed, then the Promotions and Matriculation Committee Chair or the Student Affairs Committee Chair will make a recommendation to the WCUCOM Dean;
- If the recommendation to dismiss is accepted, then the WCUCOM Dean will notify the student, the initiating Chairperson, the Associate Registrar for WCUCOM, and the WCUCOM Associate Dean, Student Affairs;
- If the student disagrees with the decision, then he/she should refer to Appeals of Remediation, Warning, Probation, Denied LOA Request/Re-entry, and Dismissal; and
- As soon as the Associate Dean, Student Affairs is formally notified by the Dean of the final decision of a student's withdrawal or dismissal, a memorandum stating the change in the student's status will be produced, and all appropriate WCUCOM offices and professors will be notified.

Before leaving campus, the student must undergo an exit interview with the following:

- WCUCOM Student Affairs Office;
- WCU Student Services Office;
- Financial Aid Office;

- Business Office;
- Library; and
- The student must report to the Associate Registrar for WCUCOM to complete the withdrawal process.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA) POLICY

Leaves of absences are intended to accommodate a student who experiences life situations, medically documented medical conditions, or medically documented psychological conditions that significantly impair his or her ability to function successfully or safely as a student. In these instances, time away from the university for treatment and recovery will allow the student to recover to a level that will enable him or her to participate fully in academic coursework and the university community.

As part of the medical community, students function not just as individuals, but also as connected parts of the university, the community, and the healthcare environment. When a student becomes impaired to the extent of requiring a leave of absence, this impairment often impacts that larger community. WCUCOM has a vested interest and a responsibility, both to the student and the larger community, to establish criteria regarding eligibility for re-enrollment following a leave of absence. The criteria include, but are not limited to, compelling evidence that the condition that precipitated the leave of absence has been sufficiently addressed to the point where it will no longer adversely affect the student's safety and functioning; *therefore, WCUCOM reserves the right to deny readmission to any student who has requested to return from a leave of absence.* Substantial compliance with any conditions associated with the leave of absence will be determined by the Student Affairs Committee, and a recommendation to the WCUCOM Dean will be made prior to granting a return from leave. Recommendations for exact placement in the program of study will be made by the P&M Committee and will be determined by several factors that include, but are not limited to, the student's pre-leave status and length of leave of absence. Leaves of absence may be either administrative or voluntary for any of the reasons listed below. Leaves of absence will not be granted for segments of time greater than 180 consecutive days.

All leaves of absence must be requested in writing to the Associate Dean, Student Affairs, who will review the request and make a recommendation to the WCUCOM Dean. All leave of absences are granted for specific periods of time. The time spent on leave of absence may count against the maximum allotted time for degree completion (six years from the original date of matriculation). Any amount of time over a total of twelve months during a student's academic career at WCUCOM will be counted as part of the maximum allotted time for degree completion.

Due to the academic rigor of the OMS 1 and OMS 2 years, leave of absences exceeding two weeks in duration may necessitate the student to enter a decelerated curriculum. Exact placement within the curriculum will be recommended to the WCUCOM Dean by the Promotions and Matriculation Committee.